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Authorized Signature

Number: CW-IM-004-001
Issue Date: 03/09/2004

Topic: Foster Care

Subject: Referrals for CampToBelong: A Camp for Siblings Separated in FC

Applies to (check all that apply):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All DHS employees | <input type="checkbox"/> County Mental Health Directors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Area Agencies on Aging | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children, Adults and Families | <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors and People with Disabilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County DD Program Managers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): CHS |

Message:

CAMP TO BELONG

An Experience for Siblings Separated in Foster Care Request for Referrals for the June, 2004 CampToBelong

This document is divided into four parts:

1. A Quick Overview of Camp To Belong
2. What We've Learned from Our Previous Experiences
3. How to Get More Information
4. Referral Process

1. A QUICK OVERVIEW OF CAMP TO BELONG

WHAT	A five-day camp in Colorado for siblings separated from one another in substitute care
WHO	Kids ages 8 to 18+
WHEN	June 5 - 10, 2004
WHERE	Gypsum, Colorado

CAMP DETAILS

Staff to camper ratio is 3/4 kids to 1 counselor

Camp activities include fun and meaningful opportunities for siblings to have experiences together, such as horseback riding, rafting, swimming and wall climbing

Sibling Enhancement Program is designed for brothers and sisters who have been separated from each other as a result of not being placed together.

Life Seminar Program for campers 14 years and older, is designed to support teenagers in foster care as they approach their emancipation from the foster system. They visit colleges, meet with career planners, military recruiters, and representatives from service organizations to talk about different paths available after high school.

Therapeutic Art Activities provide opportunities for kids to create personal objects to give each other; everything from photos to a Sibling Pillow with art and personal messages.

March 19th, 2004, is the due date for referrals

2. WHAT WE'VE LEARNED FROM PRIOR EXPERIENCES WITH CAMP TO BELONG HISTORY

This is the 3rd year Oregon DHS anticipates sending kids to the National Camp To Belong. In previous years, we've sent brothers and sisters to the Colorado and California Camps.

THE KIDS

They've loved and treasured the experience, no matter how old or skeptic they were at the beginning. All of them want to go again. There's been wonderful connections made resulting in kids seeing each other more after they're home - sometimes because they initiate it; other times because their foster parents see the need for it.

TRANSPORTATION

Airfare arrangements to and from the Camp will be made by DHS. All campers will fly to, and return from, the camp on the same flight. Department staff, and/or volunteers approved by the Department will escort the campers during their travel.

COMMITMENT

There is a time/paperwork commitment for all of us.

- Caseworkers will determine who is appropriate, contact the kid/s and their FP's regarding participation and, if appropriate, make the referral. If the camper is selected, there will be a set of documents to complete - Camp Application Forms, Medical Information, Consent to Travel, and Court Requirements, if any. In addition, the application will ask approval to use the child's name and/or photos in various camp activities and information. It's optional, but needs to be addressed and responded to. Last year, two of our campers were featured in a Good Morning America segment regarding the Camp. We can help you obtain those approvals if you want to.
- Campers, along with caseworkers and/or foster parents, will attend a 4 hour orientation session sometime mid-May. The orientation will be scheduled at a time and location most convenient to everyone.

- Staff and foster parents will arrange for campers to be at, and return from, the Portland Airport.

For your information, in past years, there's been a great of coordination among all of us regarding the above activities.

March 19th, 2004, is the due date for referrals

3. FOR MORE INFORMATION

The above provides only a brief overview of the camp, history, and other details. For more specific information about Camp To Belong, or consultation regarding specific children and arrangements, contact:

- see the Web Site at <http://www.camptobelong.org>
- contact Karyn Schimmels at kschimmels@verizon.net, or 503-542-2338
- contact Milli Morisette at 503-945-6635, or milli.morisette@state.or.us

March 19th, 2004, is the due date for referrals

4. REFERRAL PROCESS

WHO TO REFER?

Kids who are separated by placement in different families/homes/centers, AND as a result, have had little opportunity to spend time together. Because these kids are often in different counties, sometimes different states, making the referral often requires coordinating with other staff.

Kids ages 8 and above can be referred. When deciding who is appropriate, consider the following. The Camp staff is prepared. They expect to be with kids who:

- have not participated in some of the "camping activities" - rafting, horse back riding, arts and crafts etc.,
- have not spent time with their brothers and sisters,
- might be upset by feelings and thoughts that come up during this time,
- have emotional and physical limitations, are on medication, need special attention,

They know that lots of our kids are coming with these and other issues, concerns, challenges. They are prepared for that.

If you have kids you'd like to refer, but are wondering if they'd be appropriate, contact Karyn Schimmels (phone number and e-mail provided above). She has been a caseworker in our department and is a Camp To Belong counselor.

HOW TO REFER

Referrals must be e-mailed to Milli Morisette (phone and e-mail noted above) by **3/19/04.**

The referral format is simple because it begins with the following assumption: you've reviewed the information above, contacted the kids, foster parents, other staff; everyone is on board and agree the kids you're referring should go to Camp To Belong.

Then, please send the following:

1. Names, DOB, Location (foster home, group home, residential treatment, other location) of referred Campers,
2. Names of caseworkers/responsible person for each referred camper,
3. Briefly - How long have the kids been in care? How long will they be in care? Why aren't they living together now? Do they have contact with one another now? How will they benefit from this experience?
What do the kids think about going? How do their FP's or other "caregivers" feel about it?
4. Under the leadership of Karyn Schimmels, funds are currently being raised through private donations and other events. The number of kids eligible for camp will be dependent on available funds. Finally, please indicate if you are referring a youth enrolled with Independent Living Program, or is eligible for enrollment.

AND THEN . . .

- You will receive notice within 2 weeks regarding selection of this year's campers.
- Once notified, there'll be a quick turnaround time for paperwork to be completed.
- We'll work with you to get information completed and routed to the correct people.
- Karyn Schimmels will make transportation arrangements immediately and you will be given that information so you can start planning to get kids to and from the airport.
- Camp To Belong staff will mail campers packets and brochures and other information once they receive the names and addresses.
- We'll schedule the date and site for the Orientation quickly to give you as much notice as possible.

If you have any questions about this information, contact:

Contact(s):	Milli Morisette		
Phone:	503-945-6635	Fax:	503-945-6969
E-mail:	Milli.morisette@state.or.us		